

1940, when the Army Parachute Test Platoon was first authorized by the United States Department of War, and was launched when 48 volunteers began training in July of 1940;

Whereas the Parachute Test Platoon performed the first official Army parachute jump on August 16, 1940;

Whereas the success of the Parachute Test Platoon in the days immediately preceding the entry of the United States into World War II led to the formation of a formidable force of airborne units that, since then, have served with distinction and repeated success in armed hostilities;

Whereas among those units are the former 11th, 13th, and 17th Airborne Divisions, the venerable 82nd Airborne Division, the versatile 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), and the airborne regiments and battalions (some as components of those divisions, some as separate units) that achieved distinction as the elite 75th Ranger Regiment, the 173rd Airborne Brigade, the 187th Infantry (Airborne) Regiment, the 503rd, 507th, 508th, 517th, 541st, and 542nd Parachute Infantry Regiments, the 88th Glider Infantry Regiment, the 509th, 551st, and 555th Parachute Infantry Battalions, and the 550th Airborne Infantry Battalion;

Whereas the achievements of the airborne forces during World War II provided a basis of evolution into a diversified force of parachute and air assault units that, over the years, have fought in Korea, Vietnam, Grenada, Panama, the Persian Gulf Region, and Somalia, and have engaged in peacekeeping operations in Lebanon, the Sinai Peninsula, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo;

Whereas the modern-day airborne force that has evolved from those World War II beginnings is an agile, powerful force that, in large part, is composed of the 82nd Airborne Division, the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), and the 75th Ranger Regiment which, together with other units, comprise the quick reaction force of the Army's XVIII Airborne Corps when not operating separately under a regional combatant commander;

Whereas that modern-day airborne force also includes other elite forces composed entirely of airborne trained and qualified special operations warriors, including Army Special Forces, Marine Corps Force Reconnaissance units, Navy SEALs, and Air Force combat control teams, all or most of which comprise the forces of the United States Special Operations Command;

Whereas in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, the 75th Ranger Regiment, special forces units, and units of the 82nd Airborne Division and the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), together with other units of the Armed Forces, have been prosecuting the war against terrorism by carrying out combat operations in Afghanistan, training operations in the Philippines, and other operations elsewhere;

Whereas in the aftermath of the President's announcement of Operation Iraqi Freedom in March 2003, the 75th Ranger Regiment, special forces units, and units of the 82nd Airborne Division, the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), and the 173rd Airborne Brigade, together with other units of the Armed Forces, have been prosecuting the war against terrorism, carrying out combat operations, conducting civil affair missions, and assisting in establishing democracy in Iraq;

Whereas the airborne forces are and will continue to be at the ready and the forefront until the Global War on Terrorism is concluded;

Whereas of the members and former members of the United States combat airborne

forces, all have achieved distinction by earning the right to wear the airborne's "Silver Wings of Courage", thousands have achieved the distinction of making combat jumps, 69 have earned the Medal of Honor, and hundreds have earned the Distinguished-Service Cross, Silver Star, or other decorations and awards for displays of such traits as heroism, gallantry, intrepidity, and valor;

Whereas the members and former members of the United States combat airborne forces are members of a proud and honorable fraternity of the profession of arms that is made exclusive by those distinctions which, together with their special skills and achievements, distinguish them as intrepid combat parachutists, special operations forces, and (in former days) glider troops; and

Whereas the history and achievements of the members and former members of the airborne forces of the United States Armed Forces warrant special expressions of the gratitude of the American people as the airborne community celebrates August 16, 2004, as the 64th anniversary of the first official jump by the Army Parachute Test Platoon: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates August 16, 2004, as "National Airborne Day"; and

(2) requests that the President issue a proclamation calling on Federal, State, and local administrators and the people of the United States to observe "National Airborne Day" with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I am pleased to rise today to submit a Senate resolution which designates August 16, 2004 as "National Airborne Day."

Our friend and former colleague, the late Senator Strom Thurmond, introduced this resolution in past years. Senator Thurmond served with the 82nd Airborne Division, one of the first airborne divisions to be organized in the U.S. Army.

During a 2-year period during World War II, the regiments of the 82nd Airborne served in Italy at Anzio, in France at Normandy, and at the Battle of the Bulge.

As a member of the 82nd Airborne Division, Senator Strom Thurmond participated in the landings at Normandy in June 1944.

Later this year we will celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the D-Day landings and the Battle of Bulge.

On June 25, 1940, the War Department authorized the Parachute Test Platoon to experiment with the potential use of airborne troops. The Parachute Test Platoon, which was composed of 48 volunteers, performed the first official Army parachute jump on August 16, 1940. The success of the Platoon led to the formation of a large and successful airborne contingent that has served from World War II until the present.

The 11th, 13th, 17th, and 101st Airborne Divisions and numerous other regimental and battalion size airborne units were also organized following the success of the Parachute Test Platoon. In the last 64 years, these airborne forces have performed in important military and peace-keeping operations all over the world, including Operation Iraqi Freedom, and it is only appropriate that we designate a day to salute the contributions they have made to this Nation.

Through passage of "National Airborne Day," the Senate will reaffirm our support for the members of the airborne community.

I would like to thank Airborne veterans and Airborne units for their tireless commitment to our Nation's defense and for the ideals of duty, honor, country they embody. Airborne!

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2860. Mrs. BOXER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1637, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to comply with the World Trade Organization rulings on the FSC/ETI benefit in a manner that preserves jobs and production activities in the United States, to reform and simplify the international taxation rules of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2861. Mr. VOINOVICH (for himself and Mr. BAUCUS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2862. Mr. SANTORUM submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2863. Mr. SANTORUM submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2864. Mr. SANTORUM submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2865. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2866. Mr. BUNNING (for himself and Mr. CONRAD) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2867. Mr. BENNETT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2868. Mrs. DOLE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2869. Mr. GRAHAM, of Florida (for himself, Mr. NELSON, of Florida, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2870. Mr. GRAHAM, of Florida submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2871. Mr. GRAHAM, of Florida submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2872. Mr. GRAHAM, of Florida submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2873. Mr. THOMAS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2874. Mr. THOMAS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2875. Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. CHAFEE, Mr. DASCHLE, and Mr. SMITH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her

to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2876. Mrs. HUTCHISON (for herself, Mr. SMITH, and Ms. LANDRIEU) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2877. Mr. BAUCUS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2878. Mr. PRYOR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2879. Mrs. CLINTON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2880. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2881. Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. KERRY, and Ms. MIKULSKI) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1637, supra.

SA 2882. Mr. GRASSLEY (for Mr. BUNNING (for himself, Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. SANTORUM, Mr. CONRAD, and Mr. BAUCUS)) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2886 proposed by Mr. BUNNING (for himself, Ms. STABENOW, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. KOHL, and Mr. ROCKEFELLER) to the bill S. 1637, supra.

SA 2883. Mr. DAYTON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2884. Mr. DAYTON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2885. Mr. DAYTON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2886. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. FRIST) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the bill S. 1637, supra.

SA 2887. Ms. COLLINS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2888. Mrs. HUTCHISON (for herself, Mr. FRIST, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mr. ALEXANDER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2889. Mr. SANTORUM submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2890. Mr. SANTORUM submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2860. Mrs. BOXER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1637, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to comply with the World Trade Organization rulings on the FSC/ETI benefit in a manner that preserves jobs and production activities in the United States, to reform and simplify the international taxation rules of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ CREDIT AGAINST FICA TAXES FOR EMPLOYERS OF FIRST RESPONDERS WHO ARE CALLED TO ACTIVE DUTY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter C of chapter 21 is amended by redesignating section 3128 as section 3129 and inserting after section 3127 the following new section:

“SEC. 3128. CREDIT AGAINST TAX FOR EMPLOYERS OF FIRST RESPONDERS.

“(a) ALLOWANCE OF CREDIT.—There shall be allowed as a credit against the tax imposed by this chapter an amount equal to 50 percent of the wages paid to each qualified first responder of the employer.

“(b) QUALIFIED FIRST RESPONDER.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘qualified first responder’ means any person who is—

“(1) employed as a law enforcement official, a firefighter, or a paramedic,

“(2) a member of the Ready Reserve of a reserve component of an Armed Force of the United States (as defined in section 10142 and 10101 of title 10, United States Code), and

“(3)(A) serving on active duty for a period of more than 30 days (within the meaning of section 101(d) of such title 10),

“(B) hospitalized for, or convalescing from, an illness or injury incurred in, or aggravated during, the performance of such active duty, or

“(C) not present at work during the 14-day period beginning at the end of such active duty or the end of the period referred to in paragraph (2).”.

(b) TRANSFER OF FUNDS.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer from the general revenues of the Federal Government an amount sufficient so as to ensure that the income and balances of the trust funds under section 201 of the Social Security Act are not reduced as a result of the application of the amendment made by subsection (a).

(c) DETERMINATION OF BENEFITS.—In making any determination of benefits under title II of the Social Security Act and part A of title XVIII of such Act, the Commissioner of Social Security shall disregard the effect of the amendment made by subsection (a) on any individual's earnings record.

(d) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for subchapter C of chapter 21 is amended by striking the last 2 items and inserting the following:

“Sec. 3128. Credit against tax for employers of first responders.

“Sec. 3129. Short title.”.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to wages paid after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2861. Mr. VOINOVICH (for himself and Mr. BAUCUS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1637, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to comply with the World Trade Organization rulings on the FSC/ETI benefit in a manner that preserves jobs and production activities in the United States, to reform and simplify the international taxation rules of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION ON COMPREHENSIVE TAX REFORM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There is established the “Blue Ribbon Commission on Comprehensive Tax Reform” (in this section referred to as the “Commission”).

(2) MEMBERSHIP.—

(A) COMPOSITION.—The Commission shall be composed of 17 members of whom—

(i) 3 shall be appointed by the majority leader of the Senate;

(ii) 3 shall be appointed by the minority leader of the Senate;

(iii) 3 shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

(iv) 3 shall be appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives; and

(v) 5 shall be appointed by the President, of which no more than 3 shall be of the same party as the President.

(B) FEDERAL EMPLOYEES.—The members of the Commission may be employees or former employees of the Federal Government.

(C) DATE.—The appointments of the members of the Commission shall be made not later than October 30, 2004.

(3) PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT; VACANCIES.—Members shall be appointed for the life of the Commission. Any vacancy in the Commission shall not affect its powers, but shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(4) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which all members of the Commission have been appointed, the Commission shall hold its first meeting.

(5) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet at the call of the Chairman.

(6) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number of members may hold hearings.

(7) CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN.—The President shall select a Chairman and Vice Chairman from among its members.

(b) DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION.—

(1) STUDY.—The Commission shall conduct a thorough study of all matters relating to a comprehensive reform of the Federal tax system, including the reform of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the implementation (if appropriate) of other types of tax systems.

(2) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The Commission shall develop recommendations on how to comprehensively reform the Federal tax system in a manner that generates appropriate revenue for the Federal Government.

(3) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date on which all initial members of the commission have been appointed pursuant to subsection (a)(2), the Commission shall submit a report to the President and Congress which shall contain a detailed statement of the findings and conclusions of the Commission, together with its recommendations for such legislation and administrative actions as it considers appropriate.

(c) POWERS OF THE COMMISSION.—

(1) HEARINGS.—The Commission may hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such testimony, and receive such evidence as the Commission considers advisable to carry out this Act.

(2) INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—The Commission may secure directly from any Federal department or agency such information as the Commission considers necessary to carry out this Act. Upon request of the Chairman of the Commission, the head of such department or agency shall furnish such information to the Commission.

(3) POSTAL SERVICES.—The Commission may use the United States mails in the same manner and under the same conditions as other departments and agencies of the Federal Government.

(4) GIFTS.—The Commission may accept, use, and dispose of gifts or donations of services or property.

(d) COMMISSION PERSONNEL MATTERS.—

(1) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.—Each member of the Commission who is not an officer or employee of the Federal Government shall be compensated at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic